

Fire Sprinkler Testimony

Quadrant Homes

Testimony Before the Washington State Building Code Council

In Support of Voluntary Residential Fire Sprinklers

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Additional Comments from Quadrant Homes About Residential Fire Sprinklers

Quadrant Homes has installed nearly a thousand fire sprinkler systems, as required by various jurisdictions in Western Washington. Before design, permitting and water purveyance, our experience for the actual cost of installation is closer to \$8,000/unit. The jurisdictions with whom we have worked simply will not approve installation of inexpensive systems.

It is true that separate meters or special types of meters are not necessary for a system to function, but the reality is those features are required in most installations, are expensive, and are not a decision made by Fire Marshalls. For example, Covington Water District charges \$400.00 and \$165.00 per year for usage for a separate meter.

This really calls into question the wisdom of installing sprinklers as backup or supplement to the already highly effective smoke detector. Statistics (and even the hearing testimony) point to a sizeable gap from no smoke detectors or inoperable detectors. Why should society attempt to overcome this statistical gap with an ultra-expensive method and then apply it only to a fraction of a percentage point of the residential homes? If life safety and property damage are the concerns, focus on getting smoke detectors in every home and making them work. Smoke detectors save lives and are a cost-effective means for both life safety and minimizing property damage when combined with personal protection planning.

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